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Nobody's Darlings: the lives and legacy of Australian women artists in Europe

Escape to the country: Australian women artists in European art colonies

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Lecture summary

From the 1870s to the early twentieth century, many artists left the city to live and work in small rural villages. Beginning in France at Barbizon and later in Brittany, art colonies soon spread across Europe, America, and Australia. They became a major phenomenon of the period, marking a significant shift in art production from urban to rural settings and creating a distinct yet interconnected "rural art world." At their height, artist colonies thrived as centres of experimentation and innovation. These close-knit, sociable communities were especially important for women artists, providing supportive networks and new professional opportunities. This lecture explores the experiences of Australian and New Zealand artists Eleanor Ritchie Harrison, Iso Rae, Frances Hodgkins, and Hilda Rix Nicholas in European art colonies.

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AGNSW

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